

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Mrs. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

RECOGNIZING THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PINEDALE ASSEMBLY CENTER

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 109) recognizing the historical significance of the Pinedale Assembly Center, the reporting site for 4,823 Japanese Americans who were unjustly interned during World War II.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 109

Whereas on February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which authorized the forced internment of both United States citizens and legal resident aliens of Japanese ancestry during World War II;

Whereas in the largest single relocation of individuals in the United States in U.S. history, approximately 120,000 of these Japanese Americans were forced into internment camps by the United States Government in violation of their fundamental Constitutional rights;

Whereas due to this unjust internment, these Japanese Americans faced tremendous hardships, such as the loss of their homes, businesses, jobs, and dignity;

Whereas following Executive Order 9066, Japanese Americans in parts of Washington, Oregon, California, and southern Arizona were ordered to report to assembly centers before being removed to more permanent war relocation centers;

Whereas the Pinedale Assembly Center, located in Fresno, California, was the reporting site for 4,823 Japanese Americans;

Whereas February 19th, the anniversary of Executive Order 9066, is known as the Day of Remembrance;

Whereas the Pinedale Assembly Center Memorial Project Committee is charged with the task of establishing a memorial to recognize the historic tragedy that took place at the Pinedale Assembly Center; and

Whereas the ground-breaking ceremony for the memorial at the Pinedale Assembly Center will take place on February 19, 2007, the 65th anniversary of Executive Order 9066: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives recognizes the historical significance of the Pinedale Assembly Center to the Nation and the importance of an appropriate memorial at that site to serve as a place for remembering the hardships endured by Japanese Americans, so that the United States will be reminded of the need to remain vigilant in protecting our Nation's core values of equality, due process of law, and fundamental fairness.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 109. We have been discussing in the previous resolution Executive Order 9066. When President Roosevelt signed that order, approximately 120,000 Japanese Americans were forced into internment camps, leading to the loss of their livelihoods, homes, and jobs. This action was the largest relocation of Americans in our history. Before being deported to permanent camps in desolate areas and behind barbed wires, thousands of Japanese Americans were temporarily held at assembly centers. Close to 5,000 Japanese Americans reported to the Pinedale Assembly Center in Fresno, California.

The Pinedale Assembly Center Memorial Project Committee will establish a memorial at that site, marking the tragedy that occurred there. The groundbreaking ceremony for the memorial will take place in just a few days, on February 19, 2007, 65 years after the signing of Executive Order 9066 and a day that the Japanese American community most appropriately recognizes as a national day of remembrance.

H. Res. 109 recognizes the historical significance of the site. The site is a symbol of the injustices suffered by Japanese Americans during World War II and a reminder of how fragile our civil liberties are in the face of fear, prejudice, and paranoia. I particularly want to commend my colleague, Representative COSTA of California, for introducing this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 109, recognizing the historical significance of the Pinedale Assembly Center, the reporting site for over 4,823 Americans of Japanese ancestry who were unjustly interned during World War II.

The Pinedale Assembly Center is located 8 miles north of downtown Fresno, California, on vacant land. It is a stark place, as was the policy that was supported by Executive Order 9066 signed by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt to authorize the tragic internment of Japanese Americans at the beginning of World War II.

The assembly center was encircled by a high chain-link fence, topped with three rows of barbed wire, and it caged American citizens whose only crime was their ancestry. Soldiers gave orders to citizens who should have been free; livelihoods were put on hold; uncertainty and fear punctuated each day. Thousands of law-abiding citizens who loved America and contributed to its strength had been trapped in endless rows of drab cell blocks.

The center serves as a symbol of America's stumbling. But our country has regained its footing. It has appro-

priately apologized for the tragic mistake of President Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066, and it is reaffirming its commitment, through this resolution before us today, to never forget its mistakes lest they be repeated.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to my colleague from California (Mr. HONDA).

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. BERMAN for his leadership.

I rise today in support of H. Res. 109, which recognizes the historical significance of the Pinedale Assembly Center, and I want to thank House leadership for bringing two resolutions on the floor today recognizing the important historical aspects of the Japanese American internment. I also want to thank Congressman COSTA for his leadership in introducing this very important resolution.

Executive Order 9066 authorized the exclusion and internment of all Japanese Americans living on the west coast during World War II. As we recognize the Pinedale Assembly Center, I want us to place the internment period into a broader historical context rather than just focus on the plight of the Japanese Americans during World War II.

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Our Nation has always battled the dueling sentiments of openness and freedom on the one hand and apprehension and fear of perceived outsiders on the other. Due to apprehension and fear when our economy took a downturn in the 1880s, the Asian community became the target of politicians looking for someone to blame.

In 1882 the Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act to keep out people of all Chinese origin. During World War II, Japanese Americans were the well-known target of the government's submission to apprehension and fear.

During this time, 10,000 Italian Americans were forced to relocate; 3,278 were incarcerated, while nearly 11,000 German Americans were incarcerated. German and Italian Americans were restricted during World War II by measures that branded them enemy aliens and required identification cards, travel restrictions, seizure of personal property as well.

Our Federal Government has made amends for the fundamental violations of the basic rights of those of Japanese ancestry that took place pursuant to Executive Order 9066, but we must continue to learn from these events. In the post-9/11 world, we need to protect our Nation and our civil liberties more than ever.

As political leaders we must not fail to uphold constitutional principles.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

I would like to associate myself with the comments of Mr. HONDA. I think it is very clear that you can't remember 65 years ago with the resolution and